

Aye Myanmar Association's community-based intervention to combat violence against sex workers, 2017-2020

Spring 2020 Evaluation
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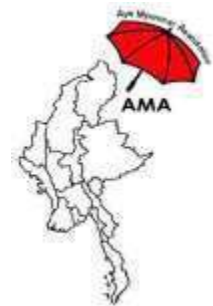


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Acronyms

AMA	Aye Myanmar Association
APNSW	Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers
CBO	community-based organization
DIC	drop-in centre, community centre where AMA offers services
FGD	focus group discussion
FSW	female sex workers
IDI	in-depth interviews
GBV	gender-based violence
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HIV/AIDS	HIV and AIDS, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
MMK	Myanmar kyat (money)
NAP	National AIDS Program
PLWHA	people living with HIV/AIDS
PWID	people who inject drugs
PWUD	people who use drugs
STI	sexually transmitted infection
UNAIDS	United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNTFEVAWG	UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Girls
VASW	violence against sex workers
VAWG	violence against women and girls
VCT	voluntary counselling and testing, as for HIV

Acknowledgments

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This Evaluation Report has been developed by an independent evaluator. The analysis presented in this report reflects the views of the author and may not necessarily represent those of APNSW, its partners or the UN Trust Fund.

Executive Summary

Aye Myanmar Association (AMA) implemented its exceptionally successful community-based intervention to alleviate the different forms of violence against sex workers with funding from the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Girls. The project's objectives were to improve access and utilization of services for GBV and HIV to meet needs of particular groups who experience and at high risk of gender-based violence and HIV, and to increase understanding and support for gender equality and HIV response in the community. The project utilizes a number of strategies, including promoting and providing legal and paralegal services; psychological counselling; accompaniment to medical care providers; access to safe spaces; advocacy with police and law enforcement; advocacy for legal reform; capacity development for legal personnel including law enforcement, law makers and the judiciary; and developing a smart-phone app for reporting violence.

Sex workers face disproportionate levels of violence in Myanmar. Evidence suggests that police are both primary perpetrators of VASW as well as key gatekeepers to sex worker human rights, enabling societal impunity toward sex worker populations. Gender inequality, stigma, and discrimination against sex work enables the police, clients, intimate partners, and general society to perpetrate violence against sex workers with impunity. Within this environment, sex workers are less able to access health or legal support services in response to incidents of violence. Sex workers face substantial barriers to accessing HIV prevention, treatment and care services, largely due to stigma and discrimination, punitive legal environments, and client and police-related violence and abuses. These social, legal and economic factors contribute to their high risk of acquiring HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Goals and targets of numbers of people reached were met or exceeded:

- 22 paralegal/outreach workers worked 3 years out in the field level to achieve the goals and objectives of the UNTF project.
- These 22 paralegals reached 6,904 female sex workers and 1090 transgender sex workers, exceeding targets.
- AMA exceeded the target to reach 500 transgender sex workers by recruiting transgender sex workers to reach other transgender sex workers.
- AMA trained 371 police personnel in all 4 sites, 31 more (nearly 10% more) than the target of 340.
- AMA's 24-hour hotline received 481 calls. Paralegal outreach workers have their own mobile phones and they they can be contacted directly for support, bypassing the hotline.
- During the project period, AMA dealt with 141 cases in the courts.
- However, not all arrests lead to court cases: 65% of sex workers assisted by AMA get released either before going to the police station or from the police station. In other words, if an AMA paralegal is able to reach the station or court there before police send the case to court, then there is a 65% probability that they will be released from the police station without going to court.

- AMA trained 123 representatives from 21 NGOs/CBOs across the country, exceeding the target of 70 civil society representatives by 75%.

The project led to direct improvements in the lives of women and girls in the form of decreased violence, particularly violence from members of law enforcement. Additional benefits to the direct beneficiaries were the empowerment of the community both as an outcome and as a necessary step toward the success and sustainability of the project.

The project was very successful: police violence against sex workers has reduced enormously, as demonstrated and reported by direct beneficiaries, AMA staff, and even UNAIDS and other partners. Individuals now recognize different kinds of violence including family and intimate partner violence that were accepted previously, and sex workers have filed court cases against violent partners. Project outputs and outcomes were achieved primarily through the legal and paralegal services, including legal and “know your rights” education for sex workers. Project outputs and outcomes directly addressed the needs of the targeted population. The clearest positive change is the great reduction in violence, particularly from police, experienced by primary beneficiaries. Violence reduction is a key positive change in the lives of women and girls in Myanmar, particularly the vulnerable primary beneficiaries whose stigmatization renders them a target for violence.

The reduction specifically in police violence is especially remarkable. One outcome is that police are more aware of their personal responsibility to enforce the law and that they can be fined or sued when they do not enforce the actual written law; selectively enforcing morality is not acceptable under the rule of law. Police education seems to have occurred both through meetings with AMA representatives and through court cases involving sex workers. In this way, the combination of educational and legal programming has culminated in the empowerment of the sex worker community to fight for their rights under the law in the court system, including against police and other violence. The knowledge of their rights will not be diminished by any change in funding, and is sustainable.

The most astonishing impact of this project is at the level of community empowerment, now that this group of particularly vulnerable, marginalized and stigmatized women know their rights and how to pursue the realization of their rights using the rule of law in court. Community empowerment is hard to measure but was clearly evident both in the form of individuals increasing their professional and personal capacity, demonstrated in part by the way AMA staff are sought by other organizations to hire, overcoming their stigmatized background but increasing turnover at the organization. Another facet demonstrating community empowerment was the support each member of the community offered to others within their community, starting with the dedicated staff, and the trainings for individuals, and the way individuals shared this information even in harsh environments like prison.

AMA’s End Violence project has been extremely successful, and has led to decreased violence for one immense outcome. The following recommendations are intended to help AMA improve overall and specifically to expand and improve its End Violence programming, and to help

members of the government, law enforcement officers, and other agencies continue their work to reduce violence and maintain strong relations with members of AMA's community.

The majority of recommendations are for AMA staff. AMA uses a grassroots approach in that the agenda is driven by its community members, or primary beneficiaries. Community needs have driven AMA's campaigns and strategies, and determined AMA's programmatic agenda. Community members are involved at all stages of programming, from ideation, design, implementation, and through evaluation. This community empowerment methodology is successful because primary beneficiaries are personally invested in the goals, activities and outcomes of AMA's work, because they have helped determine the projects and design the programs. Others can learn how to implement community-driven programming and therefore how to build not only community, but to empower community and improve relationships with primary beneficiaries.

Recommendations for AMA staff and advisers

Advocacy

- Continue advocating for decriminalization of sex work based on the harms of criminalization, including violence from police, clients and the public.
- Share data and information with UNAIDS and NAP and other key partners in order to encourage them to join forces in evidence-based advocacy.
- Incorporate a media strategy into the advocacy plan.
- Consider taking a role in national advocacy in alliance with other organizations that supporting programs promoting an enabling environment for SWs.

Direct services

- Expand the paralegal staff in places where the paralegals have more work than they can effectively do, as in Yangon right now.
- Consider hiring a staff attorney in Myitkyina, even part-time.
- Continue hiring from the target community.
- Continue holding monthly meetings.
- Reconsider the usefulness of the iMonitor app, and do not be persuaded by sunken costs; be prepared to sell the app for use in places where smart phones are more reliable for sex workers. Perhaps this can be held onto for the future rather than investing more into iMonitor.

Staff care

- Develop and implement a plan to ensure the safety of the staff working at night and in staff roles that have been threatened for their work responding to violence against sex workers. The people sex workers call for help may need someone they can call for help.
- Develop and implement a plan to address stress and exhaustion among staff including staff responding to violence, to prevent burnout and turnover of staff. Each time staff turns over presents an opportunity to train more people from the community, but this takes time and investment.

Work with police and law enforcement

- Continue working with police; the decrease in police violence due to AMA's End Violence initiative is amazing.
- Explore different ways to reach police and judiciary.
- Target the highest possible ranks of law enforcement that can be reached, because they can change police policy and culture. While sex workers most often interact with low-level officers, officers of higher rank can change policy and thereby change the actions of the officers working below them.

Media campaigns

- Continue working with media and continue the media campaign to reduce stigmatization of sex workers. The media campaign has been successful but must be sustained in order to have ongoing impact; media can play a large role fighting stigma and discrimination against sex workers.
- Increase the number of posts and videos shared on social media (e.g. Facebook); social media can be very cost effective.
- Organize panel discussions with the participation of authorities and celebrities and arrange media coverage of these events, like Ponna Khin's participation in the International Day for Sex Worker Rights.

Recommendations for members of the government

Members of parliament and other representatives of the government of Myanmar should continue to meet with AMA, because AMA has interesting information to share about the lives of women and the poor in Myanmar that may be useful in lawmaking.

Recommendations for NGOs and UN agencies

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have been key partners in AMA's success, particularly regarding advocacy. To continue this mutually supportive relationship, it is recommended that NGOs

- Continue supporting and working with AMA and its members
- Continue to include AMA in advocacy and media campaigns
- Continue participating in AMA's campaigns
- Consider replicating some or all of AMA's methods, particularly taking leads from the ground upward, involving the people directly affected/targeted by programming at all stages of ideation, design, implementation, and evaluation

Recommendations for police and law enforcement

Police have become more professional during this three-year project, and have improved their engagement with the community. These changes are praiseworthy, and it is hoped that this progress will continue. For the police to continue to improve, it is recommended that police and law enforcement officers at all levels:

- Meet with AMA to listen to AMA's information about people in the community and their rights under the law of Myanmar
- Continue legal education for the police, including standards of evidence and professional practices.
- Stop using paid informers to entrap people, because paid informers do not generate high quality evidence or build trust in law enforcement.

Recommendations for members of the judiciary

The judiciary has been very important in court decisions. It is clear that the judiciary exercises its role in an informed way. Members of the judiciary should

- continue pursuing new information and applying standards of evidence to cases involving sex workers.

Recommendations for AMA community members

Community members are the source of AMA's success and power. To continue building community-level empowerment, community members should:

- Continue sharing information about AMA programming, including with people in prison. Word-of-mouth information sharing has been very successful.
- Continue sharing legal information and legal resources with other members of the community.
- Consider learning more about the law, and pursuing paralegal information/services/roles. The demands for legal and paralegal services from AMA are greater than the capacity; there is a need for more community paralegal and legal education shared by members of the community.
- Consider a training-of-trainers (ToT) to increase paralegal service access. It may be necessary to start with literacy training and build up a cumulative legal education program through which some community members develop their legal knowledge to help fill in the gaps where paralegal service demands exceed the capacity of the paralegal staff.

1. Background and context of AMA's community-based intervention to combat violence against sex workers

Aye Myanmar Association implemented a three-year community-based intervention to combat violence against sex workers from April 2017 through March 2020. Aye Myanmar Association (AMA) began as a sex worker empowerment program combating HIV. The link between violence and HIV transmission is clear and so anti-violence programming was developed.

Sex workers everywhere experience violence and Myanmar is no different: sex workers face disproportionate levels of violence in Myanmar. VAWG is widely accepted in Myanmar¹ and elsewhere; and violence against sex workers (VASW) is also accepted, perhaps even more so. Female sex workers face disproportionate levels of violence in Myanmar; gender inequality, structural stigma and discrimination against sex work enables police, clients, inmate partners and the larger society to perpetrate violence against sex workers with impunity. Within this environment, sex workers are less able to access health or legal support services in response to incidents of violence, or obtain HIV-related care and treatment. Few care services are available for victims of gender-based violence in Myanmar.²

Sex workers have been among the populations most affected by HIV since the beginning of the epidemic more than 30 years ago. HIV prevalence is considerably higher among sex workers than in the general population. Globally, female sex workers (FSW) are 13.5 times more likely to be living with HIV than all other women, including in hyper-endemic countries. In Myanmar UNAIDS estimates the total number of Female Sex Workers to be 66,000.³

Sex workers face substantial barriers in accessing prevention, treatment and care services, largely due to stigma and discrimination, punitive legal environments, and client and police-related violence and abuses. These social, legal and economic factors contribute to their high risk of acquiring HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Although much progress has been made over the past decade in reducing HIV prevalence, Myanmar continues to experience an epidemic where sex workers remain one of the populations most affected by HIV. UNAIDS reports that HIV prevalence among sex workers is 8.3%⁴, down from 14.6% among FSWs in 2018.⁵

All countries in the Asia Pacific region, with the exception of New Zealand and the state of New South Wales in Australia, criminalise sex work or specific aspects of sex work. The Suppression

¹ Tanabe M, Greer A, Leigh J, Modi P, Davis WW, Mhote PP, Htoo EM, Otterness CM & Parmar P. 2019 An exploration of gender-based violence in eastern Myanmar in the context of political transition: findings from a qualitative sexual and reproductive health assessment, *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters*, 27:2, 112-125, DOI: [10.1080/26410397.2019.1665161](https://doi.org/10.1080/26410397.2019.1665161).

Gender Equality Network. "Service Provision for Gender-based Violence Survivors in Myanmar. 2018.

² Gender Equality Network. "Service Provision for Gender-based Violence Survivors in Myanmar. 2018.

³ <https://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/myanmar>

⁴ UNAIDS cites the 2019 Biological and Behavioural Survey, <https://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/myanmar>

⁵ UNAIDS Data 2018, page 153. http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/unaid-data-2018_en.pdf

of Prostitution Act 1949 is the law governing prosecution for the act of prostitution in Myanmar. It defines offences for soliciting, living on the earnings of prostitution, procuring persons to engage in prostitution, owning or managing a brothel or renting premises for use as a brothel, and aiding and abetting prostitution. Under the act, sex workers can face up to three years imprisonment or be detained in a “prescribed centre”. Individuals responsible for owning or managing sex work premises can be sentenced to up to five years imprisonment. Criminalisation increases HIV risk and vulnerability among sex workers by facilitating stigma and discrimination, creating barriers to sexual health and harm reduction services, and adversely affecting the self-esteem of sex workers and their ability to make informed choices about their health. Where sex work is criminalised, sex workers have fewer legal protections and may be exploited or abused by clients, co-workers and law enforcement officials without legal recourse. Fear of arrest may drive sex workers “underground” where it is harder to negotiate safe working conditions and consistent use of condoms. Access to HIV and other health services may also be impeded. Incarceration and compulsory detention may expose detainees to sexual assault, but in the prisons, condoms are contraband and health services (including antiretroviral medicines) are often denied. Denial of life-saving medicines can result in drug resistance, treatment failure and progression to advanced HIV disease.

Violence is one of the primary issues facing sex workers around the world.⁶ Violence may take many forms: sex workers worldwide are subjected to physical, sexual, and emotional violence⁷. Perpetrators may include intimate partners, police and military (the State), family, vigilantes, and society. Violence against sex workers (VASW) can occur at work, in the home, or in public. Sex workers around the world cite the state and its agents as violators of their human rights⁸, with abuses including violence committed by police and other law enforcement and the military. A UNDP report examining the impact of law, policy and enforcement practices on sex work found that sex workers experienced regular extortion, arrest and incarceration at the hands of the police.⁹

⁶ WHO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, NSWP, World Bank & UNDP. 2013. Implementing comprehensive HIV/STI programmes with sex workers: practical approaches from collaborative interventions, page 23

https://www.who.int/hiv/pub/sti/sex_worker_implementation/swit_chpt2.pdf?ua=1

⁷ The World Health Organization (WHO) defines physical violence as being subjected to physical force that can cause death, injury or harm. WHO defines sexual violence as rape, gang rape, sexual harassment, being physically forced or psychologically intimidated into engage in sex or subjected to sex acts against one’s will, or that one finds degrading or humiliating. WHO defines emotional or psychological violence as including, but not limited to, “being insulted or made to feel bad about oneself; being humiliated or belittled in front of other people; being threatened with loss of custody of one’s children; being confined or isolated from family or friends; being threatened with harm to oneself or someone one cares about; repeated shouting, inducing fear through intimidating words or gestures; controlling behaviour; and the destruction of possessions.” All three definitions from WHO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, NSWP, World Bank & UNDP. 2013. *Ibid*, page 23

https://www.who.int/hiv/pub/sti/sex_worker_implementation/swit_chpt2.pdf?ua=1

⁸ WHO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, NSWP, World Bank & UNDP. 2013. *Ibid*. Deering KN, Amin A, Shoveller J, et al. A systematic review of the correlates of violence against sex workers. *Am J Public Health*. 2014;104(5):e42–e54. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2014.301909

⁹ UNAIDS, UNFPA, and UNDP. 2012. Sex work and the law in Asia and the Pacific, pages 141-146. <https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/hivaids/English/HIV-2012-SexWorkAndLaw.pdf>

In Myanmar, police sometimes misuse existing laws to extort money from sex workers. Many sex workers do not know their rights and have little or no legal literacy, which makes them especially vulnerable to police intimidation and harassment. Therefore, they are reluctant to challenge police abuses because they worry about further aggravating the police. The laws and policies currently governing sex work in Myanmar impact greatly on HIV vulnerability among sex workers.

An unpublished baseline survey conducted by APNSW and AMA in 2017 found that 54.6% FSWs respondents mentioned that they had experienced violence from clients in the past year. In approximately half, or 49.6% of violent incidents, the perpetrators of violence were police. Transgender sex workers reported 34.5% reported violence from clients and 44.7% reported violence from police. As transgender sex workers meet clients on the street, they face more violence from police on the street. Sex workers of all genders reported facing terrible violence from intimate partners.

2. Description of the project

Aye Myanmar Association (AMA) implemented its community-based intervention to alleviate the different forms of violence against sex workers with funding from the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Girls. The project worked to address these gaps and achieve an overall goal of supporting marginalized women who experience violence and/or HIV. The project's objectives were to improve access and utilization of services for GBV and HIV to meet needs of particular groups who experience and at high risk of gender-based violence and HIV, and to increase understanding and support for gender equality and HIV response in the community. The project utilizes a number of strategies, including promoting and providing legal and paralegal services; psychological counseling; accompaniment to medical care providers; access to safe spaces; advocacy with police and law enforcement; advocacy for legal reform; capacity development for legal personnel including law enforcement, law makers and the judiciary; and developing a smart-phone app for reporting violence.

The primary beneficiaries of this community-based intervention are sex workers, particularly female and transgender sex workers. These segments of the population are frequently subject to different acts of violence and are at significantly high risk to acquire HIV/AIDS. For example, female sex workers are amongst the key populations in Myanmar and are highly vulnerable to both HIV and violence. The primary beneficiaries of this project struggle with low socio-economic status, unemployment, and structural forces that prevent their enjoying safe working conditions. Most of them are not able to access different medical, legal and economic services to improve their situations due to their low economic status, justified fear of stigma and discrimination, and/or low awareness regarding the means of preventing the twin epidemics of HIV and gender-based violence (GBV).

The secondary beneficiaries of this project are: INGOs, NGOs, and community-based organizations in Myanmar; health professionals from private, non-governmental and

governmental health care providers; and law enforcement, lawmakers and the judiciary. The project intended to create a supportive environment to empower women and support their access to stigma-free services in order to expand their abilities to address the different forms of violence they experience every day. This evaluation assesses the success of efforts for both primary and secondary beneficiaries.

The anticipated outcomes of AMA's anti-violence initiative included:

- Greater knowledge among sex workers about, and improved access to, quality crisis support, including through referrals;
- Sex workers having increased knowledge of human rights,
- Increased use of collective action by sex workers to prevent and respond to violence against sex workers, including through advocacy for structural change to reduce their vulnerability;
- Local and national police and law enforcement becoming better informed about sex worker rights, and better data about violence against sex workers, with data being used to hold police accountable; and
- Establishment of peer learning mechanisms for sex workers, and the use of these mechanisms to build collective mobilization for sex workers' human rights.

Sex-worker led, community-based empowerment strategies have proven successful and cost-effective in reducing the prevalence of HIV and violence among sex workers.¹⁰ This approach was first used by the Ashodaya project in India, and then adapted and implemented by AMA for use in Myanmar. Based on their experiences, AMA then identified key factors for the successful reduction of violence; their information was drawn from periodic meetings, including focus group discussions, with sex worker members. These key factors are:

- greater collective agency among SWs,
- enhanced self-esteem and self-efficacy contributing to sex workers' increased uptake of crisis response mechanisms, and
- relationship-building with stakeholders to reduce stigma, discrimination and violence.

Three evidence-based strategies drive AMA's anti-violence initiative:

1. Sex-worker-led, community empowerment approaches,
2. Multi-sectoral coordination, and
3. Institutionalization of partnership with police and law enforcement.

3. Evaluation purpose, objectives and scope

The final evaluation is required by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Girls. At the beginning of this intervention, AMA had only just begun its anti-violence efforts. As of 31

¹⁰ WHO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, NSWP, World Bank & UNDP. 2013. Implementing comprehensive HIV/STI programmes with sex workers: practical approaches from collaborative interventions, pages 26-35
https://www.who.int/hiv/pub/sti/sex_worker_implementation/swit_chpt2.pdf?ua=1.

March 2020, the term for the UNTF grant was completed and the grant was closed. This evaluation assesses the extent to which each indicator was achieved and determines whether the results for the goal, each outcome and output were realized. This final evaluation assessed women's experience of safety, health and wellbeing (project goal), and societal perspective about gender equality, women's rights, intimate partner violence, acceptability of accessing HIV related information and service and acceptability of women's economic participation. This evaluation documents the key successes, challenges and lessons learnt from this particular community-based intervention, and assessed the relevance, effectiveness and management arrangements of the project. The results and outcomes of this evaluation are intended to help inform AMA how best to sustain and improve this anti-violence intervention.

Scope of the evaluation

Timeframe: Duration of the project, April 2017-March 2020.

Coverage: Female and transgender sex workers, including survivors of violence, in 4 cities in Myanmar (Yangon, Bago, Mandalay, and Myitkyina); community-based organizations and members of the police and judiciary. The evaluation team also consulted representatives of the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Department of Social Welfare, UNFPA, UN Women and UNAIDS Myanmar country offices, as well as other key partners including local and international NGOs.

Interventions to be covered by the evaluation are the following:

- Know your rights training and legal education for sex workers within AMA drop-in centres and community service centres. DIC services include: psychological, legal, listening supports as well as rapid response to incidents of violence against sex workers.
- Capacity development component for law enforcement and INGOs and NGOs,
- Community-based awareness and advocacy campaigns with police and legislators to change behaviour among police and promote decriminalization of sex work in Myanmar, and
- The rapid response system established between the project and services providers.

Objectives of the Evaluation

At the end of the three-year project, it is vital to assess the progress achieved by the project and the changes in perception, knowledge and even practice that occurred as a result of the project's different key activities.

The overall objectives of this evaluation are to:

1. Evaluate the entire project in terms of effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and impact with strong focus on assessing the results at the outcome and project goals.
2. Generate key lessons and identify promising practices for learning by documenting cases of positive changes and key lessons learnt as a result of the project implementation.
3. Assess changes in terms of knowledge and perceptions of the different target groups regarding violence against sex workers.

4. Methodology

This evaluation has three aims:

1. To evaluate AMA's entire project addressing violence against women in terms of effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and impact with strong focus on assessing the results at the outcome and project goals.
2. To generate key lessons and identify promising practices for learning by documenting cases of positive changes and key lessons learned as a result of the project implementation, which can then be used to improve the sustainability of anti-violence achievements.
3. To assess changes in terms of knowledge and perceptions of the different target groups regarding violence against sex workers.

Evaluation questions and evaluation criteria

The key questions that need to be answered by this evaluation include the following divided into five categories of analysis. The five overall evaluation criteria applied for this evaluation are relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

Effectiveness

1. To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs achieved and how?
2. To what extent did the project reach the targeted beneficiaries at the project goal a outcome levels? How many beneficiaries have been reached?
3. To what extent has this project generated positive changes in the lives of targeted (and untargeted) women and girls in relation to the specific forms of violence addressed by the project? Why? What are the key changes in the lives of those women and/or girls? Please describe those changes.
4. What internal and external factors contributed to the achievement and/or failure of the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs? How?
5. To what extent was the project successful in advocating for policy change? If it was successful, explain why.
6. In case the project was successful in setting-up new policies (relate to HIV& Violence again women), is the policy change likely to be institutionalized and sustained?

Relevance

1. To what extent was the project strategy and activities implemented relevant in responding to the needs of women and girls (direct beneficiaries)?
2. To what extent do achieved results (project goal, outcomes and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls?

Efficiency

How efficiently and timely has this project been implemented and managed in accordance with the project document?

Sustainability

How are the achieved results, especially the positive changes generated by the project in the lives of women and girls at the project goal level, going to be sustained after this project ends?

Impact

What are the unintended consequences (positive and negative) of the project?

Knowledge Generation

1. What key lessons learned can be shared with other practitioners on Ending Violence against Women and Girls?
2. Are there any promising practices? If yes, what are they and how can these promising practices be replicated in other projects and/or in other countries that have similar interventions?

In addition to above listed questions, at the end of end-line survey, AMA will be able to answer the following questions:

- To what extent did the project reach the targeted beneficiaries at the project different levels (goal, outcomes and outputs)?
- What are the internal and external factors contributed to the achievement, partial achievement or non-achievement of the intended outputs and outcomes?
- To what extent was the project successful in combating violence against sex workers?
- To what extent did the project outputs and outcomes address the needs of the targeted population? Have the achieved results generated any positive change?

Data sources

Data sources include previous progress and annual reports about the project, other relevant reports, experiences of violence including group discussions and other data sources used for prior reporting, and UN information about Myanmar, such as the UNAIDS information about sex workers.

The main data sources are:

- The proposal and the Results and Resources Framework (RRF),
- The project's progress and annual reports,
- The project's monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management system, and
- Interviews and FGDs with the project's direct beneficiaries, target groups and relevant stakeholders.

UNAIDS, UNFPA, UN Women, and appropriate officials have been consulted.

AMA facilitated introductions to legal and paralegal staff, and drop-in centre staff and attendees, and other community-based intervention participants.

Description of data collection methods and analysis

Data collection methods used included:

- Desk review of documents related to the project, including annual and progress reports, and other documentation related to regional efforts to address violence and promote community empowerment
- Focus group discussions (FGDs) with 43 sex workers and LGBTI people and 5 AMA staff
- In-depth interviews (IDIs) with sex workers, including survivors of violence, to document some of the cases where sex workers benefited from the violence prevention and response program
- In-depth interviews with members of CBOs and community leaders

- Interviews and group discussions with staff at drop-in centres and the community-based centers, and with sex work gatekeepers including middlemen and venue managers

Considering the 2020 SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, this evaluation was initially postponed from April 2020 until August 2020. The initial plan to duplicate the baseline survey from 2017 was not possible, and so more questions about experiences with violence were included in the group discussions and IDIs, with both primary beneficiaries and secondary beneficiaries.

The health and safety of staff and beneficiaries was prioritized, and all health precautions were taken. For example, as virus rates were low enough to permit some in-person meetings, some interviews and group discussions were held face-to-face in Yangon, Bago and Mandalay. All interviews and group discussions in Myitkyina were remote and relied on telephones and meeting applications. Bago is close to Yangon and a mix of remote and in-person discussions were conducted.

Very sensitive issues were discussed with AMA staff, sex workers and victims of violence, including how AMA has helped sex worker victims of violence, as well as their recommendations to improve services and expand access. When individuals referred to their experiences of violence during group discussions, they were asked to stay for an in-depth interview about their personal experiences, including with AMA's rapid response system.

FGD and interview protocols are included in Annex B. FGDs and interviews were conducted in Burmese, and the protocols included here were translated into English. Some were drafted by the international consultant and revised with input from the national consultant and people who work with AMA. All reports including progress and annual reports are in English.

Sampling

6 focus group discussions were conducted with a total of 37 primary beneficiaries, sex workers and LGBTI people in 4 cities. Some were remote, and some were in-person. In-person discussions were with people who came for services and who had been informed in advance about the group discussion.

N participants	location	method
8	Bago	in-person
7	Myitkyina	online
5	Mandalay	in-person
7	Mandalay	in-person
6	Yangon	in-person
4	Yangon	in-person

After each FGD, people who described having experienced violence or having used AMA's hotline and rapid response services were asked for additional information in IDIs.

In addition, 8 AMA drop-in centre staff (4 in Yangon, 2 in Mandalay, and 1 in Bago and 1 in Myitkyina) were interviewed (only the staff in Myitkyina was interviewed remotely). An

additional 5 AMA staff from all locations participated in a remote FGD. 6 sex industry gatekeepers were interviewed in person in Bago and Mandalay.

AMA staff

4	Yangon	In person
2	Mandalay	In person
1	Myintkyina	online
1	Bago	In person
5	All AMA staff	online

Sex industry gatekeepers

3	Mandalay	In person
3	Bago	In person

Interviews with secondary beneficiaries

4 representatives of UN agencies were interviewed, all remotely.

5 Government representatives in Yangon, Bago and Mandalay were interviewed, some in person and some remotely.

6 representatives of NGOs were interviewed in Bago, Mandalay, Myitkyina and Yangon. NGO staff in Yangon and Myitkyina were interviewed remotely. Interviewees in Bago and Mandalay were interviewed in person.

Interviewees are listed with their affiliations and locations in Appendix C.

Limitations of the evaluation methodology

The evaluation team successfully used innovative means to open discussion about sensitive topics like violent experiences. However, even so it may not be possible to ascertain the variety of violence experienced by women. The coronavirus pandemic prevented the evaluation team from replicating the baseline survey from 2017 asking how many participants experienced violence in the past year. For this reason, the evaluation relied on the monitoring system for this project, which included incidents of violence reported to AMA throughout the project.

During group discussions, some people may hesitate to speak about sensitive topics. For this reason, we aimed to undertake in-depth interviews about sensitive information. However, even so it may not be possible to ascertain the variety and level of violence experienced by sex workers.

Ethical considerations

This evaluation adhered to the UN Evaluation Group's Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and exceeded their standards for the anonymity of AMA participants for the serious nature of victimization and stigmatization of victims of violence and people who trade sex.

Tin Tin Win, the national consultant who collected the data, is an experienced researcher and understands the need and importance of confidentiality, and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of respondents.

Data and information shared by FGD participants and interviewees was collected anonymously, no names were included in any paper or digital notes. Confidentiality and informed consent were discussed at the beginning of FGDs and interviews.

For participants who described traumatic experiences, for example, experiences of violence, AMA staff was on hand to offer support, counselling and referral to any services required. These are the services they have offered during the duration of the community-based intervention, and they are experienced.

Safety of the team and participants was the paramount concern in any situation. The safety and security of evaluation participants and the evaluation team was the paramount concern. The team planned to immediately leave any situation that seemed dangerous or threatening, but fortunately this did not arise.

5. Findings and Analysis

Overall, AMA's anti-violence programming has been effective, relevant, efficient, sustainable, impactful, and generated knowledge that can be shared and used by others.

Effectiveness

1. To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs achieved and how?
2. To what extent did the project reach the targeted beneficiaries at the project goal at outcome levels? How many beneficiaries have been reached?
3. To what extent has this project generated positive changes in the lives of targeted (and untargeted) women and girls in relation to the specific forms of violence addressed by the project? Why? What are the key changes in the lives of those women and/or girls? Please describe those changes.

The project was very successful:

All targets set by the project for itself were exceeded.

Secondary beneficiaries including police and the judiciary became more aware of standards of evidence and the rights of the accused and rights of victims of crimes.

Individuals now recognize different kinds of violence including family violence that were accepted previously. Project outputs and outcomes were achieved primarily through the legal and paralegal services, including legal and "know your rights" education for sex workers.

Goals and targets of numbers of people reached were exceeded.

- 22 paralegal/outreach workers worked 3 years out in the field level to achieve the goals and objectives of the UNTF project.
- These 22 paralegals reached 6,904 female sex workers and 1090 transgender sex workers, exceeding targets.

- AMA exceeded the target to reach 500 transgender sex workers by recruiting transgender sex workers to reach other transgender sex workers.
- AMA trained 371 police personnel in all 4 sites, 31 more (nearly 10 per cent more) than the target of 340.
- AMA's 24-hour hotline received 481 calls. Paralegal outreach workers have their own mobile phones and they can be contacted directly for support, bypassing the hotline.
- During the project period, AMA dealt with 141 cases in the courts.
- However, not all arrests lead to court cases: 65% of sex workers assisted by AMA get released either before going to the police station or from the police station. In other words, if an AMA paralegal is able to reach the station or court there before police send the case to court, then there is a 65% probability that they will be released from the police station without going to court.
- AMA trained 123 representatives from 21 NGOs/CBOs across the country, exceeding the target of 70 civil society representatives by 75%.

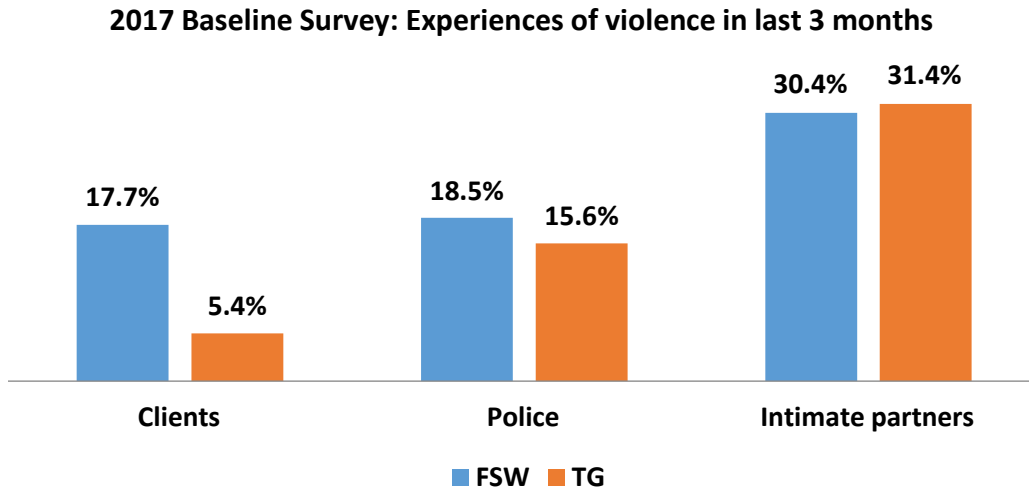
Project outputs and outcomes directly addressed the needs of the targeted population. The clearest positive change is the great reduction in violence, particularly from police, experienced by primary beneficiaries. Violence reduction is a key positive change in the lives of women and girls in Myanmar, particularly the vulnerable primary beneficiaries whose stigmatization renders them a target for violence. Workplace conditions have improved: In the past violence, stigma, discrimination and verbal abuse was very common in the workplace. Now the managers, pimps, supervisors have become more respectful towards sex workers they employ because they understand that sex workers can complain about violence and abuse to AMA.

The reduction specifically in police violence is especially remarkable. Violence decreased overall and police violence decreased astonishingly, and primary beneficiaries had increased access to justice in the form of legal proceedings involving presenting evidence.

The 2017 baseline survey found that in the 3 months prior to being surveyed:

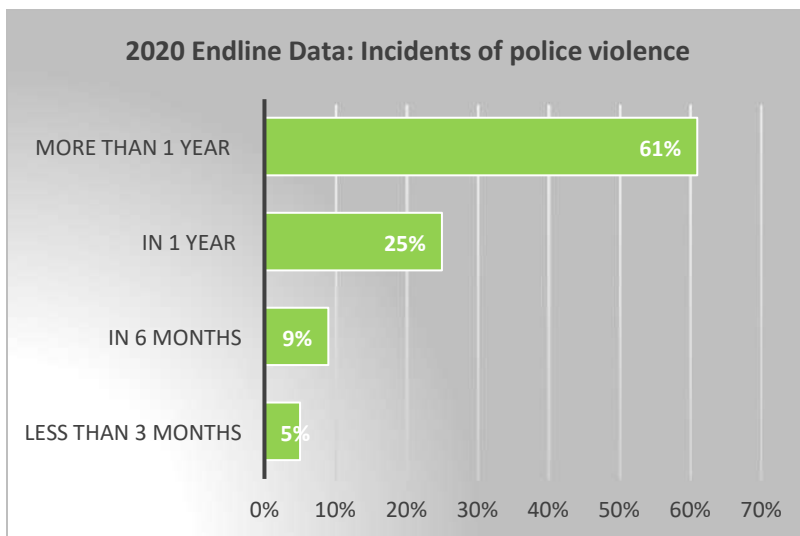
- 17.7 per cent of FSWs and 5.5 percent of transgender sex workers experienced violence from clients
- 18.5 per cent of FSWs and 15.6 percent of transgender sex workers experienced violence from police
- 30.4 per cent of FSWs and 31.4 percent of transgender sex workers experienced violence from intimate partners

Figure 1. 2017 Baseline Survey: Experiences of violence in last 3 months



The decrease in violence against sex workers is most astonishing from police. End-line data from the project about incidents of police violence demonstrate a clear decline over time, with only 5 per cent of primary beneficiaries reporting having experienced an incident of police violence in the previous quarter, in contrast to the 18.5 per cent of FSWs and 15.6 per cent of transgender sex workers who reported experienced violence from police in the quarter before the baseline survey.

Figure 2. 2020 Endline Data: Incidents of police violence



This graph demonstrates the ongoing decrease in incidents of police violence against female and transgender sex workers, with 5 per cent reporting an incident of police violence in the past quarter, and 9 per cent reporting an incident of police violence in the quarter before that, and 25 per cent reporting an incident of police violence in the six months prior.

Qualitative data indicate that police are more aware about the rights of sex workers due to AMA's police advocacy. One outcome of the project is that police are more aware of their personal responsibility to enforce the law and that they can be fined or sued when they do not enforce the actual written law; selectively enforcing morality is not acceptable under the rule of law. Police education seems to have occurred both through meetings with AMA representatives and through court cases involving sex workers. Police are aware of this project as AMA staff work very closely with the police. For all of these reasons, random arrests of sex workers are decreasing. In this way, the combination of educational and legal programming has culminated in the empowerment of the sex worker community to fight for their rights under the law in the court system, including against police and other violence. The knowledge of their rights will not be diminished by any change in funding, and is sustainable. AMA is in the process of diversifying funding for the legal program in order to expand to meet the demand for services even after the end of the UNTFEVAW grant. They have successfully appealed to other funders to support this work, and it is anticipated that they will be able to secure some funding in 2021.

However strong the reduction in police and other violence, the most astonishing impact of this project is at the level of community empowerment, now that this group of particularly vulnerable, marginalized and stigmatized women know their rights and how to pursue the realization of their rights using the rule of law in court. Community empowerment is hard to measure but was clearly evident both in the form of individuals increasing their professional and personal capacity, demonstrated in part by the way AMA staff are sought by other organizations to hire, overcoming their stigmatized background but increasing turnover at the organization. Another facet demonstrating community empowerment was the support each member of the community offered to others within their community, starting with the dedicated staff, and the trainings for individuals, and the way individuals shared this information even in harsh environments like prison.

An internal factor that has contributed to the success of AMA's violence response project is that the staff are passionate about the issue, in part because they come from the target population. AMA staff have experience in sex work, and may themselves have been victimized. Now they are passionate about responding to violence against sex workers.

An external factor that has affected the project is the culture of the police, and their power to reject the messages of AMA's advocacy. AMA has reached low-level police officers on the streets, but not the higher levels of law enforcement. Police hierarchy may have limited AMA's effectiveness to date, because higher levels of police have not heard AMA's recommendations for police practices. It is possible that high-ranking law enforcement officials have ordered actions counter to AMA's recommendations to stop police brutalizing sex workers and demanding bribes and sex. Law enforcement officials are still implicated in rape of sex workers in custody and extorting sex and money (bribes) from sex workers and third parties in the sex trade. Individual sex workers reported paying the police between 20,000 and 30,000 Myanmar kyat (MMK) per month, and this represents a significant portion of a sex worker's income; individual clients pay between 5000 MMK and 7000 MMK in brothels and may pay as little as 2000 MMK on the street. For the least fortunate sex workers, police bribes may be the

equivalent of servicing 15 clients, and that may be more than the least fortunate earn through sex work. During the ongoing novel coronavirus pandemic, street-based sex workers described great difficulty generating money, but no abatement in police demands for money.

Advocacy for decriminalization of sex work is ongoing, and is tied to some of the work with media that AMA does. AMA successfully generated the discussion and built the environment in which it is now possible to bring about policy changes around sex work. This is supported by UNAIDS' representatives and others describing how AMA's work with celebrities and media really changed the dialogue. The issue of sex work and the related issues of health and violence have been the heart of the media campaign, but more needs to be done.

The advocacy coalition represents amazing multi-sector coordination; the coalition includes not only AMA but also other NGOs, alongside UNAIDS and government agency representatives. Diverse stakeholders recommended continuing advocacy to change the laws addressing sex work, including representatives from UNAIDS, AMA staff, sex workers, and sex trade gatekeepers. Everyone involved understands that law reform takes time, and that law reform addressing sex work takes longer still because religious, political, cultural and legal systems are especially resistant to change related to sex. However, while legal reform may feel like it is moving slowly to AMA staff and beneficiaries, in fact, this wildly successful campaign is moving very quickly in comparison to law reform campaigns elsewhere.

Police behaviour has clearly changed because of this work, and physical battery of sex workers has declined, but AMA is unaware of any changes in written police policy. In some areas there are unwritten policy changes by police; these changes may not be sustainable but are currently practiced by police in some locations. In this way, this project has changed police behaviour and introduced new, less violent norms among police officers. A challenge going forward will be to advocate for these new norms to be institutionalized in written policy.

Relevance

The project remains extremely relevant because it addresses the foremost issue in the lives of sex workers (direct beneficiaries) as they identified, and the project strategy and activities implemented addressed the needs of direct beneficiaries by addressing and responding to interpersonal violence. The project addresses violence that has already happened, and police violence has been reduced in most locations; however, bribery by police and rape and extortion of sex by police continues. While reporting violence from other people including intimate partners and family members is up, it is unclear whether violence has decreased. Anti-violence programming and its associated advocacy agenda continues to be relevant to the needs of women and girls in Myanmar, as sex workers face violence from police, and police are able to rape and extort sex from sex workers in the context of arrest; decriminalization of sex work remains the foremost advocacy goal. Decriminalization of sex work would remove the reason police have power and impetus to engage with sex workers; immense progress has been made but decriminalization has not been achieved, legal and policy change is a long-term objective that has exceeded the duration of the UN TF grant term of three years.

Efficiency

AMA's anti-violence project has been implemented efficiently and managed in accordance with the project document. The program has made immense achievements in the three-years of the UN TF grant, demonstrating efficient efficacy, exceeding goals and targets. Female and transgender sex workers in four sites in Myanmar have experienced improved safety, improved access to justice and improved access to quality support services that address violence against women. Sex workers have increased knowledge of their rights and are empowered to take collective action to prevent and respond to violence. The response by law enforcement to cases of violence against sex workers has significantly improved and impunity has been reduced through transparent and socially accountable mechanisms.

The iMonitor app was less efficient than anticipated. During the reporting period, although over 400 sex workers installed the app in their mobile phones, only 47 reported violence through i-Monitor. Direct calls to the paralegals and hotline were used more frequently.

Regarding project management, APNSW and AMA handled funds and managed programmes efficiently and without waste, in line with the three-year timeline for the completion of the grant.

Sustainability

Some of the positive changes in the lives of women and girls generated by the project will be sustained even if the project ends. For example, Sex workers have gained great knowledge of their human rights and of the legal system; they know not to sign papers that they do not understand, and have learned that they can defend themselves against police charges upon arrest. Another long-ranging impact of the project is that sex workers no longer accept violence as part of their job, and this has expanded into their personal lives: sex workers have reported intimate partner violence and family violence and filed court cases against violent partners. This represents a great success in the community-level empowerment of sex workers.

Impact

The most enormous outcome is that sex workers face less violence from police.

An unintended consequence of the project's success has been threats to AMA staff advocating for investigation of violence, including murder, against sex workers. AMA staff working on the anti-violence program have been threatened by civilians and police. Civilians threatened the AMA staff advocating for investigations of murders of sex workers during the pagoda festival in Bago, but staff have also been threatened in other situations, including responding to violence against sex workers. Many sex workers reported being threatened by law enforcement officers.

Knowledge Generation

Key lessons learned that can be shared with other practitioners on Ending Violence against Women and Girls include that it is possible to successfully address violence against sex workers; that media campaigns can change the perceptions of marginalized women and girls including sex workers; that community empowerment based legal rights education can successfully

challenge police violence; and that partnerships are key to long-term success, including partnerships with UN agencies, government agencies, and NGOs. AMA works differently from other projects in that AMA takes its lead from the community (primary beneficiaries), so their actions and campaigns are designed by members of the community for the community, and staff, who are hired from the primary beneficiaries (the target community) implement this agenda. Primary beneficiaries know more about their rights and are more able to recognize injustices and respond using law and the courts. This reliance on presenting evidence in court demonstrates that community empower KYR workshops and legal services including paralegal training has been enormously successful.

Promising practices include advocating for the investigation and prosecution of violence against marginalized women and girls, including sex workers; developing partnerships with key stakeholders including UN and government agencies, NGOs, and even the police; media campaigns can be successful in changing opinions and perceptions of stigmatized women and girls, including sex workers. These promising practices can be adapted and replicated by other projects and/or in other countries. In fact, AMA has assisted some organizations to adapt and replicate similar anti-violence interventions in other countries in Asia. This practice affects a far more people than the primary beneficiaries of this program: Staff and participants both support large numbers of dependents, primarily family members not limited to children. Staff in Yangon reported supporting an average of 5.8 people not including themselves. 38 sex worker and transgender FGD participants reported supporting 149 people, for an average of 3.9 dependents including but not limited to children. This means that keeping people out of prison and diminishing the length of prison stays helped far more people than the individual involved in each case, but also all of their dependents.

Staff turnover is high at AMA because sex workers hired by AMA learn skills for the organizational workplace and can move into higher-paying jobs at other organizations, jobs that were inaccessible to them before joining the AMA staff. Considering these economic needs, any type of vocational training would necessarily need to be able to support an average of 6 people in addition to the trainee; this makes paralegal and other staff positions with AMA more desirable than other work available to many if not most sex workers and LGBT people in Myanmar. Another factor in staff turnover is burnout.

AMA staff responding to violence and to arrests are very dedicated. Most instances of violence and arrest happen during the night, when paralegals and focal point persons are called to police stations to address legal cases and to help after violence has been committed against sex workers. Their working conditions may lead to “burnout,” a state of emotional and physical exhaustion common among caring professions, which can lead to lower performance and high staff turnover.¹¹ Burnout has also been documented in sex workers.¹² Addressing violence

¹¹ Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1984). Burnout in organizational settings. *Applied Social Psychology Annual*, 5, 133–153.

¹² del Mar Sánchez-Fuentes, M., Parra-Barrera, S.M. & Moyano, N. Cisgender and Transgender Sex Workers from Colombia: The Relation Between Burnout Syndrome and Working Conditions in a Prohibitionist-Regulatory Law. *Sex Research and Social Policy* (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13178-020-00475-5>

requires learning the details of traumatic events, which can be linked to secondary trauma among staff who are exposed to traumatic events and images in their work documenting human rights violations. Secondary trauma is common among people who work with victims of sexual assault¹³ and people who have experienced trauma.¹⁴

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

AMA's End Violence project has been extremely successful, and has led to decreased violence for one immense outcome. Therefore, the End Violence initiative should be sustained. The following recommendations are intended to help AMA improve overall and specifically to expand and improve its End Violence programming, and to help members of the government, law enforcement officers, and other agencies continue their work to reduce violence and maintain strong relations with members of AMA's community.

The majority of recommendations are for AMA staff. AMA uses a grassroots approach in that the agenda is driven by its community members, or primary beneficiaries. Community needs have driven AMA's campaigns and strategies, and determined AMA's programmatic agenda. Community members are involved at all stages of programming, from ideation, design, implementation, and through evaluation. This community empowerment methodology is successful because primary beneficiaries are personally invested in the goals, activities and outcomes of AMA's work, because they have helped determine the projects and design the programs. Others can learn how to implement community-driven programming and therefore how to build not only community, but to empower community and improve relationships with primary beneficiaries.

Koken, J. A. June 2009. Working in the Business of Pleasure: Emotional labor and burnout among independent female escorts. Presented at the Eastern and Mid-continent meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, St. Petersburg, Florida, United States.

Vanwesenbeeck, I. Burnout Among Female Indoor Sex Workers. *Archives of Sexual Behavior* **34**, 627–639 (2005). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-005-7912-y>

¹³ Kassam-Adams, N. (1995). *The risks of treating sexual trauma: Stress and secondary trauma in psychotherapists*. In B. H. Stamm (Ed.), *Secondary traumatic stress: Self-care issues for clinicians, researchers, and educators* (p. 37–48). The Sidran Press.

Ghahramanlou, M., & Brodbeck, C. (2000). Predictors of secondary trauma in sexual assault trauma counselors. *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health*, *2*(4), 229–240.

¹⁴ Hesse, A.R. Secondary Trauma: How Working with Trauma Survivors Affects Therapists. *Clinical Social Work Journal* **30**, 293–309 (2002). <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1016049632545>

Catherall, D.R. (1995). Preventing institutional secondary traumatic stress disorder. In C.R. Figley (Ed.). *Compassion fatigue: Secondary traumatic stress disorder from treating the traumatized*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Figley, C.R. (Ed.) (1995). *Compassion fatigue: Secondary traumatic stress disorder from treating the traumatized*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Recommendations for AMA staff and advisers

Advocacy

- Continue advocating for decriminalization of sex work based on the harms of criminalization, including violence from police, clients and the public.
- Share data and information with UNAIDS and NAP and other key partners in order to encourage them to join forces in evidence-based advocacy.
- Incorporate a media strategy into the advocacy plan.
- Consider taking a role in national advocacy in alliance with other organizations that supporting programs promoting an enabling environment for SWs.

Direct services

- Expand the paralegal staff in places where the paralegals have more work than they can effectively do, as in Yangon right now.
- Consider hiring a staff attorney in Myitkyina, even part-time.
- Continue hiring from the target community.
- Continue holding monthly meetings.
- Reconsider the usefulness of the iMonitor app, and do not be persuaded by sunken costs; be prepared to sell the app for use in places where smart phones are more reliable for sex workers. Perhaps this can be held onto for the future rather than investing more into iMonitor.

Staff care

- Develop and implement a plan to ensure the safety of the staff working at night and in staff roles that have been threatened for their work responding to violence against sex workers. The people sex workers call for help may need someone they can call for help.
- Develop and implement a plan to address stress and exhaustion among staff including staff responding to violence, to prevent burnout and turnover of staff. Each time staff turns over presents an opportunity to train more people from the community, but this takes time and investment.

Work with police and law enforcement

- Continue working with police; the decrease in police violence due to AMA's End Violence initiative is amazing.
- Explore different ways to reach police and judiciary.
- Target the highest possible ranks of law enforcement that can be reached, because they can change police policy and culture. While sex workers most often interact with low-level officers, officers of higher rank can change policy and thereby change the actions of the officers working below them.

Media campaigns

- Continue working with media and continue the media campaign to reduce stigmatization of sex workers. The media campaign has been successful but must be

sustained in order to have ongoing impact; media can play a large role fighting stigma and discrimination against sex workers.

- Increase the number of posts and videos shared on social media (e.g. Facebook); social media can be very cost effective.
- Organize panel discussions with the participation of authorities and celebrities and arrange media coverage of these events, like Ponna Khin's participation in the International Day for Sex Worker Rights.

Recommendations for members of the government

Members of parliament and other representatives of the government of Myanmar should continue to meet with AMA, because AMA has interesting information to share about the lives of women and the poor in Myanmar that may be useful in lawmaking.

Recommendations for NGOs and UN agencies

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have been key partners in AMA's success, particularly regarding advocacy. To continue this mutually supportive relationship, it is recommended that NGOs

- Continue supporting and working with AMA and its members
- Continue to include AMA in advocacy and media campaigns
- Continue participating in AMA's campaigns
- Consider replicating some or all of AMA's methods, particularly taking leads from the ground upward, involving the people directly affected/targeted by programming at all stages of ideation, design, implementation, and evaluation

Recommendations for police and law enforcement

Police have become more professional during this three-year project, and have improved their engagement with the community. These changes are praiseworthy, and it is hoped that this progress will continue. For the police to continue to improve, it is recommended that police and law enforcement officers at all levels:

- Meet with AMA to listen to AMA's information about people in the community and their rights under the law of Myanmar
- Continue legal education for the police, including standards of evidence and professional practices.
- Stop using paid informers to entrap people, because paid informers do not generate high quality evidence or build trust in law enforcement.

Recommendations for members of the judiciary

The judiciary has been very important in court decisions. It is clear that the judiciary exercises its role in an informed way. Members of the judiciary should

- continue pursuing new information and applying standards of evidence to cases involving sex workers.

Recommendations for AMA community members

Community members are the source of AMA's success and power. To continue building community-level empowerment, community members should:

- Continue sharing information about AMA programming, including with people in prison. Word-of-mouth information sharing has been very successful.
- Continue sharing legal information and legal resources with other members of the community.
- Consider learning more about the law, and pursuing paralegal information/services/roles. The demands for legal and paralegal services from AMA are greater than the capacity; there is a need for more community paralegal and legal education shared by members of the community.
- Consider a training-of-trainers (ToT) to increase paralegal service access. It may be necessary to start with literacy training and build up a cumulative legal education program through which some community members develop their legal knowledge to help fill in the gaps where paralegal service demands exceed the capacity of the paralegal staff.